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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 2 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write in connection to the briefing heard by the Security Council on Friday, 21 December 2007, during its consideration of the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

Though the briefing rightfully informed the Council that the "Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit is spending his nineteenth month in captivity in Gaza", it neglected to mention that Corporal Shalit has been denied any contact with the outside world, including visits from humanitarian and medical organizations like the Red Cross. Gilad Shalit, 21 years old, was kidnapped on 25 June 2006, after Palestinian terrorists attacked an Israeli army position outside the Gaza Strip and killed one IDF soldier and injured four others. Since then, there has been no verification of his health or condition.

Similarly, the briefing omitted the kidnapped Israeli soldiers Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, abducted by Hizbullah terrorists in an unprovoked cross-border attack on 12 July 2006, which also resulted in the killing of three other soldiers. Ehud Goldwasser, 32 years old, had just married his wife, Karnit, 10 months prior to his kidnapping by Hizbullah. At the time of abduction, Eldad Regev, 27 years old, was finishing his preparatory courses for law school.

The international community must be made aware of this severe situation, particularly as the conditions and whereabouts of the kidnapped soldiers remains unknown. The Red Cross must be allowed to visit the soldiers, and access should be granted to ensure their medical attention and treatment. Information regarding their health conditions and sign of life must be given as well. The denial of contact between the soldiers and the outside world is wholly unacceptable, and in contravention of international law.

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I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as an official document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17, "Situation in the Middle East", and 18, "Question of Palestine", and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative